

**DAVIDSON COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

*Dale Moorefield, Director*



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**Davidson County Department of Social Services  
Board Meeting Minutes  
May 23, 2017**

**Board Members Present**

**Mr. John Byrum; Ms. Barbara Presnell;  
Mr. Lance Barrett; Mr. Steve Jarvis**

**Others in Attendance**

**Mr. Dale Moorefield; Mr. Scott Craver; Ms. Katrina McMasters;  
Mrs. Elizabeth Huff; Mrs. Susan Craig; Mrs. Caroline Hedrick; Mrs. Sheri Woodyard;  
Mr. Chris Watford; Mrs. Lexa Eagle; Mr. Bill Gilleland; Ms. Nina Stout**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 4:15 p.m. by Mr. John Byrum. An invocation was offered by Mr. Byrum.

**Adoption of Agenda**

Ms. Barbara Presnell made a motion to approve the Agenda. Mr. Lance Barrett seconded the motion. The Agenda was approved unanimously.

**Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Lance Barrett made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 25, 2017 meeting. Ms. Barbara Presnell seconded this motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

**Public Address**

There was no public address. Mr. Dale Moorefield took this opportunity to introduce the special guests in the meeting, Mr. Bill Gilleland, Ms. Nina Stout, and Mr. Chris Watford, Attorney for Adult Services.

## **Management Report**

Mrs. Caroline Hedrick stated there is no expenditure report due to having final month end information delayed, as it has not come from Finance. We continue to overspend in the same areas - vehicle/travel mileage, foster care due to new laws and caseload growth. Medicaid transportation is also overspending due to usage of the service, however it will be 100 percent reimbursed. Overall, we are underspending our budget.

Mr. Dale Moorefield reported on the vacancies in the Agency. There are presently 9 vacancies instead of the 8 indicated on the report. One person who had been hired called to say they would not be accepting the job. The applications for the FNS/Medicaid position are still coming in and interviewing will begin after the position application process closes. There are currently two vacancies in CPS Investigations; however, one position will be filled effective June 5, 2017 and interviews for the second position will begin in the next week. There are two Social Work positions open in the Foster Care area and both of those are posted. One of the Office Support III positions will be filled on June 5, 2017 and the other will remain on hold. Interviewing for the two vacant positions in Child Support is complete and they are in the process of completing reference checks for both positions.

Mrs. Elizabeth Huff shared with the Board that application processing for Medicaid shows no data. This report has not been correct in NC Fast for the last few months and the State is working on it. The report card for March was withdrawn and the one for April has not been published yet. Our Agency has remained well above state minimums in the past months. Mrs. Huff believes that trend has not changed. All other information in regards to Medicaid remains about the same. There was a slight drop in the number of Medicaid applications taken, but no drop in caseloads. FNS applications are down some as well as benefits. The second fraud person is on board and trained and the number of claims being established has started to increase. In the Work First area, nine adults entered the work force. This is achieved with the help of our Goodwill Contract and their work experience program. Job training is a part of that as well as work experience. The cases in Work First now are the most difficult to place in employment, due to multiple barriers, i.e. arrest history, mental health issues, etc. In the Child Care area, spending is at about 98 percent or better each month. There are still a few children left on waiting list and this waiting list is due to the recommendation from the State to start a waiting list because of the implementation of NC FAST and trying to avoid duplicate work in two systems. The postponement of NC FAST is causing Day Care to have to work out of two systems in order not to lose funds. The postponement is due to providers having issues. In the Emergency Assistance area, spending is way down and LIEAP is over. We served almost 200 less individuals this year than last year and this is possibly due to a better economy, a milder winter, and utility companies not providing immediate credit to folk's accounts.

Mr. Scott Craver reported that Child Support is right on the brink of meeting all five goals set by the State. They are \$110,000 ahead of this time last year in collections. There was a slight dip in the number of cases and the number of cases under order is the hardest goal to meet. All of the other goals are going to be met.

Ms. Katrina McMasters reported there were a large number of reports in the month of April - 205 reports. 97 of these reports were not accepted. The physical abuse cases are on the rise. Workers are continually trying to close cases and get caseloads down. We are still at a low for overall number of cases open. There has been a steady decline in the number of children coming into foster care. The number of CFT's being completed continues to rise. Educational personnel continue to be the number one reporters for CPS referrals.

Mrs. Susan Craig reported that Foster Care has maintained about the same and the number of children in care went down by one to 163. There were 18 churches that participated in Foster Care Sunday on May 21, 2017. There may have been others that our Agency was not aware of their participation. The hope is to get good potential foster families from this initiative.

Mrs. Craig reported that in the Adult Services area, the number of reports was down slightly as well as the number of reports accepted. One of our wards passed away, causing our numbers to fall slightly. She also shared that from Mother's Day to Father's Day is Elder Abuse Awareness Month.

## **Old Business**

### **Social Services Board Appointments for 2017 – 2020**

Mr. Moorefield provided an update on the Social Services Board appointments. On May 9, 2017, Mr. Lance Barret was reappointed to his seat on the Board by the Board of Commissioners. His term will be from July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2020. Mr. Moorefield also shared that he has received an application for the other open seat that is a Social Services Commission appointment. Ms. Jane Murphy has made an application for this appointment. Ms. Murphy lives in Thomasville and works for Thomasville Medical Center and has a background in social work. At the time of this meeting, Mr. Moorefield did not know of any other applications. Ms. Murphy's application has been submitted by email and mailed as well.

## **New Business**

### **Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)**

Much work has taken place with the VITA program. Mr. Bill Gilleand has led this group as its coordinator. Our Agency has continued to work alongside other community agencies to provide this free tax service for low-income families in Davidson County. There were 32 volunteers this year and 2,028 tax returns were completed. These completed returns resulted in \$2.9 million tax refunds coming back to the people in Davidson County. Mr. Gilleland has built up a strong corps of volunteers as well as agency partnerships with the Davidson County Libraries and the Davidson County Community College. Over the past decade, 177 years of volunteer hours have been given. Mr. Gilleland is preparing to retire after 13 years with our Agency, effective June 1, 2017. Mr. Moorefield feels very strongly that Mr. Gilleland should continue to serve Davidson County in the capacity of VITA Coordinator. This is not a mandated service, but Social Services has been supportive of the program since it began in Davidson County in 2004.

Mr. Gilleland stated that he is very appreciative of the support he has received from Social Services and our involvement in this program. He also expressed his gratitude to the DSS Board and the Board of Commissioners for their support. He shared that programs in other counties are not as well supported as ours. Other VITA programs in other places have to have fund raisers to raise the money to support the programs. There are only two others programs in North Carolina supported by the Social Services in those locations. An estimate of \$425,000 dollars was saved by tax payers who did not have to pay to have their tax returns completed. That money stays in Davidson County. The number of returns completed was down this year, mainly due to the new software. The Off-season returns are down as well. We had 10 fewer DCCC students this year than last year. All of the volunteers gave more hours this year, which helped to offset the lower number of volunteers. Thomasville Library usually has the highest number of tax returns prepared. A seventh site was opened this year

at DCCC. This is a Single Stop site, focused on serving students. They received a grant and were able to pay a coordinator and a preparer. They actually did more community returns than student returns. This site will be more convenient for students and it is free as well.

There was discussion as to how the process works and the time involved in managing and carrying out this program. Mr. Gilleland is interested continuing as the VITA Coordinator after his retirement. He feels this is a very significant program for the low-income citizens of the County. Some stories of county residents' experiences with VITA were shared reiterating that this service is an extremely important outreach for lower income families in Davidson County.

Mr. Moorefield also shared that the IRS is very complimentary of Davidson County's efforts and of Mr. Gilleland. He believes this is a great service in the county. Mr. Moorefield is committed for our Agency to support a contract with Mr. Gilleland through PBB funds if the decision is made to have Mr. Gilleland continue as the VITA Coordinator. Mr. Moorefield asked that the DSS Board also support this endeavor. The Lexington Library has already offered office space for Mr. Gilleland at the newly annexed building adjacent to the main Library in Lexington. He stated that Mr. Gilleland runs a very efficient program and serves the citizens well in this capacity.

The Board thanked Mr. Gilleland for his exceptional efforts and indicated their support of the Program.

### **Program Focus – Adult Services**

Elder Abuse Awareness Month is from Mother's Day to Father's Day each year and this is an appropriate time to focus on our Adult Services area. Nina Stout, supervisor for Adult Services, leads a tightly knit unit and the population this unit serves is growing. In 2010, we had 23 wards in care and they mostly ranged in age from 80 to 90 years old. Now we have 20, 30, 40 and 50 year olds with mental health issues and other issues caused by substance abuse. We currently have 86 wards in guardianship and this number does not include the ten individuals for which we have contracted with another agency to provide services for them. Ms. Stout was recognized last week by ARC and presented the Debra Greenblatt Award for the most influential person in the community.

Ms. Stout shared that Adult Services' funding is limited. She provided information regarding the programs that Adult Services is mandated to provide as well as the one program that is not mandated. She also shared the pamphlet that is available to individuals giving a brief synopsis of the programs. She stated this is a small unit of 10, which very close-knit and rely on one another to get things done. There are 8 social workers and one Community Social Services Aid. One of the social workers monitors 13 facilities, as well as carries a caseload of wards and other individuals; these facilities have a total of 523 beds. Adult Protective Services and Guardianship are a major focus, but the other programs are important as well. Adult day care is not mandated, however, it is still the responsibility of the unit to make sure that those in need are served. There is not enough money to take care of all the adults who need the help. There is a waiting list for adult day care.

They are also having a hard time getting people placed in facilities. If Medicaid is pending, most facilities will not accept the individual until the Medicaid is approved. Families are having a hard time because of loss of jobs and/or income. How facilities are reimbursed was discussed. It is getting harder to get individuals into services and facilities.

With substance abuse being a problem, families are exploiting the elder adult, using their moneys for themselves rather than for the care of the adult. When our Agency recommends that an individual name a durable power of attorney, we also recommend that this should be someone they trust. If a POA has not already been appointed, Social Services may have to get involved and we are appointed as guardian.

We only have one aid to help people in their homes. She is currently serving 9 individuals. There are not enough resources in the community or the County to help the elderly that need help. Adult Services is thankful for Social Services' commitment and for the Board's commitment as well. The contracted services we have procured are serving the adults who have the most severe problems, which frees up our social workers to do more for the ones we still have responsibility for. Access of resources for mental health issues is not easily available. Individual family adjustment cases take up a lot of time, but it is usually time well spent because it keeps individuals from coming into the custody of the Agency. The intensity of the service is the same and quite demanding. Kathy Replogle is the APS intake worker and she is the first person anyone calling in talks with. There are three APS social workers that complete investigations and two that do treatment services. The programs in Adult Services are all mandated, but there is not a lot of money to help provide the services. The people in the unit are very dedicated and do the job very willingly. This area is quite different from the families we see in CPS, in that adults can chose not to accept services. If they refuse the service or will simply not talk to the worker, they cannot be forced to accept the services offered. If a referral is accepted for APS evaluation only then does the individual and family not have a choice for services. A family will sometimes just not accept the responsibility of making decisions for their loved ones and that is when our Agency ends up with the individual coming into custody.

Mr. Chris Watford, attorney for APS, stated there were 21 wards in 2009 when he began his work for the County. He also shared that Ms. Stout and her unit are well respected, especially in the court system. Our Agency has become the go-to place, even for the clerk of courts office when an adult has an issue that could possibly be a problem. He stated that Ms. Stout is very dedicated to the citizens of the County as well as this Agency and her staff.

The Board thanked Ms. Stout for her continued dedication to the Agency and to the people of the County.

No further business was discussed and a motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Steve Jarvis.

### **Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday, June 27, 2017, at 4:15 p.m., first floor of Social Services in Lexington, Conference Room D.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 5:21 pm.

Minutes submitted by Dale Moorefield

